



# Return and Earn:

a success story for how the NSW school community can achieve real change

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## Return and Earn milestones



Over **6.3 billion** containers returned so far



**67%** of containers supplied redeemed through the scheme (network + kerbside) in the last 12 months (Jul 20 – Jun 21)



**\$24.5 million** returned to charities and community groups via donations and fees for hosting return points

Drink containers were an increasing proportion of the NSW litter stream. From 39% in 2014-2015 to 44% in 2015-2016.

Return and Earn is a NSW Government initiative and one of the strategies to reduce litter in our environment.

Exchange for Change is the Scheme Coordinator for the NSW Container Deposit Scheme Return and Earn.

Since the launch of Return and Earn in December

2017:

- More than 6.3 billion drink containers have been returned through the Return and Earn network.
- 67% of eligible containers are redeemed through the network and kerbside (12mths Jul 20 - Jun 21) and
- \$24.4 million returned to charities and community groups via donations and fees from hosting return points.

## 3 out of 4 NSW adults participating in Return and Earn



88%

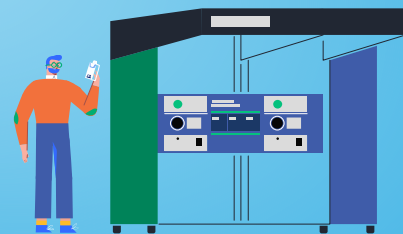
Support for the scheme

80%

Satisfaction

77%

Participation



Source: Kantar Public June 2021 consumer research survey

Consumers can participate in Return and Earn by collecting eligible drink containers and taking them to one of the Return and Earn return points to receive a 10c refund or make a donation.

The latest consumer research shows strong trust, support and participation from the NSW community with:

- 77% of NSW adults (3 out of 4) participating in Return and Earn
- 88% support the scheme and
- 80% satisfaction among scheme participants.

## Strong engagement with the NSW school community



93%

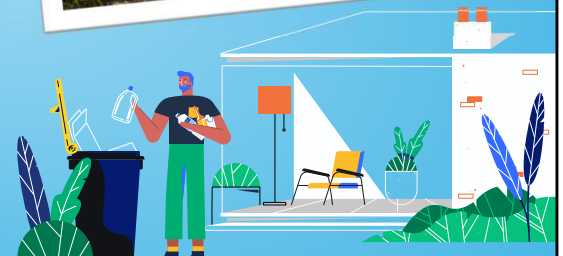
School awareness

52%

School participation

80%

Schools fundraise for school and/or community projects



Source: AAEE NSW and Return and Earn school research, April 2021

School engagement is also very strong and shows how Return and Earn has become a platform for sustainability and recycling education, with schools playing an important role in the delivery of the scheme. The April survey in partnership with the Australian Association for Environmental Education shows:

- A high level of awareness (93%) and participation (52%) of schools across the state.
- 80% of participating schools use Return and Earn to fundraise for school and/or community

projects. Return and Earn is also used to:

- Encourage positive recycling behaviours and raise awareness about recycling and litter reduction.
- Empower students to take action by linking Return and Earn with classroom learning on environmental issues, recycling and maths to demonstrate how individual actions can have a large collective impact.
- Reduce school waste collection fees by sorting eligible containers and recycling valuable resources through the Return and Earn return points.

More information about how Return and Earn can benefit your school is available at <https://returnandearn.org.au/get-your-school-involved/>

## How Return and Earn supports the NSW school community



**COLLECT** eligible bottles and cans



**620+** Return points



**EARN** a refund or make a donation



There are many schools running Return and Earn successfully as part of their sustainability and STEM programs and as a source of fundraising.

The Return and Earn network includes over 320 Reverse Vending Machines (RVMs), 27 automated depots and more than 280 Over the Counter collection points.

# Return and Earn case study



## Warilla Public School

- Warilla High School collects containers to reduce litter and landfill and raise money for solar panels.
- 8,000 containers per semester are collected from the cafeteria.
- Warilla High School partners with local businesses to encourage locals to donate to the school.
- Warilla High School installed over 50 solar panels, and it is now entirely self-sufficient for power.





# Return and Earn case study



## Glendore Public School

- Glendore Public School has returned an incredible 57,000 containers (and counting)
- The funds support the school's breakfast club, arts program for vulnerable or at-risk students, and cultural workshops for Indigenous girls.
- Return and Earn has become part of the school curriculum, with environmental impacts of litter covered in science and maths.
- Glendore Public School has reduced the amount of waste by 30%.



# Return and Earn case study



## Bountiful Early Childhood Education Centre

- Bountiful Early Childhood Education Centre, children aged from 18 months to 5 years learnt about the importance of helping others and caring for the environment with Return and Earn.
- They returned 2,000 bottles and cans and raised \$200 to support Food Bank Australia in their first two months of collecting containers.



Read more stories about early childhood centres and schools across the state on

<https://returnandearn.org.au/news/> and

Sustainable Schools NSW

<https://www.sustainableschoolsnsw.org.au/inspire/school-stories/return-and-earn-action>

# Return and Earn collection points



Automated depots can help set up an ongoing container collection system at your school. In Waverley, Woollahra and Randwick Council LGAs there are St George Recyclers and Return-it in Matraville with fundraising and collection services for schools. Visit <https://returnandearn.org.au/return-points/> to find your nearest return point.



**Reverse Vending Machines:** can process up to 500 cans and bottles in any one transaction.



**Over the Counter local businesses:** They accept smaller quantities of eligible containers (usually less than 100)

- Over 600 schools in NSW have been supported by our **automated depots**, specialised network operators, who provide schools with infrastructures (bins or bags) and regular collection services. Automated depots can process large volumes of containers (500+) and, in general, they are the best type of return points for schools and community groups who want to participate in the scheme.
  - In Waverley, Woollahra and Randwick Council LGAs there are two automated

depots, St George Recyclers and Return-it in Matraville. Both return points have fundraising and collection services for schools and can help set up an ongoing container collection system at your school. Their details are available on the Return and Earn website and our Community Engagement Manager Marta can provide further information and tips on how to set up a successful container collection at your school.

Schools can also choose to take their containers to one of Return and Earn's many Over the Counter collection points or Reverse Vending Machines.

- **Over the Counters (OTCs)** are local businesses, such as corner stores and newsagencies, participating in Return and Earn. OTCs accept smaller quantities of eligible containers (usually less than 100) over the counter in return for a cash refund. They enable schools to support their local corner store and avoid queues at the machines.
- **Reverse Vending Machines (RVMs)** can process up to 500 cans and bottles in any one transaction. Teachers, students and parents support their

school's collection drives by taking the schools' containers to their local RVM.

- **Local Donation Partner program:** Many schools participate in the Return and Earn local donation partner program and have the opportunity to be featured on their local machine(s) for a six month period. During this time people can donate their containers refunds to the school and contribute to the school's fundraiser. Schools can download the local donation partner application form from the Return and Earn website.
- **Free barcode with MyTOMRA App:** Schools can also create their unique barcode with MyTOMRA App. This is a simple tool that helps promote the option to donate. Schools, as future donation partners, can use the barcode to start their fundraising activities while waiting to become donation partners, or can use the barcode to continue raising funds after their listing on the machines has ended. The barcode can be shared via Social Media, Email, SMS, etc. it doesn't have an expiry date and can be used throughout the entire network. For example, family members living in different suburbs or cities

could save the barcode as an image on their phone and use it at their local RVM to raise funds for the school.

Schools can choose one of the Return and Earn container collection methods and return points or a combination.

**Visit <https://returnandearn.org.au/return-points/> to find your nearest return point.**

# Resources for your school



- **Return and Earn School Curriculum Package** <https://returnandearn.org.au/get-your-school-involved/>
- **Return and Earn Fundraising Toolkit** <https://returnandearn.org.au/fundraising/>
- **Return and Earn Impact Calculator** <https://returnandearn.org.au/impact-calculator/>
- **Return and Earn in Action** <https://www.sustainableschoolsnsw.org.au/inspire/school-stories/return-and-earn-action>

For more information, please visit [returnandearn.org.au](https://returnandearn.org.au)  
Contact us on 1800 813 887 or email [contactus@returnandearn.org.au](mailto:contactus@returnandearn.org.au)

Available on the Return and Earn website

**<https://returnandearn.org.au/>** there are useful resources designed to support school's participation in Return and Earn and enable teachers to discuss the environmental benefits of the scheme.

- **Return and Earn School Curriculum Package:** curriculum-linked free sustainability and recycling teaching resources for Early Learning through to Stage 5. Find out more and download your free copy at **<https://returnandearn.org.au/get-your-school-involved/>**

- **Return and Earn Impact Calculator:** an interactive tool that will let you see the water, energy and landfill savings you make when you recycle containers with Return and Earn. Calculate your impact now at <https://returnandearn.org.au/impact-calculator/>
- **Return and Earn Fundraising Toolkit:** with useful information, tips, case studies and templates to create signs, social media tiles, bin stickers that can be used to promote fundraising and recycling initiatives with Return and Earn. Download the toolkit and start fundraising with Return and Earn at <https://returnandearn.org.au/fundraising/>



